PRESERVATION RACINE, INC.

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2010

2010 TOUR OF HISTORIC PLACES

The booklet included with this newsletter describes our thirty-fifth annual Tour of Historic Places to be held on Sunday, September 26, 2010. The tour is titled *An Afternoon in the Belle City on the Lake*. The sites are:

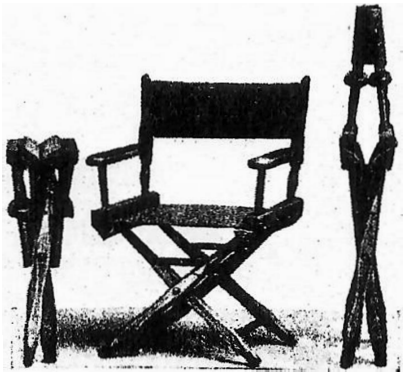
- 1815 South Main Street — Leroy and Caroline Gittings House (1927) — Tudor Revival
- 1611 College Avenue — Robert and Ida Boyd House (1872) — Italian Villa
- 1440 South Main Street — Wolff Apartments (1914) — Classic Revival
- 1130 South Main Street — Bull Manor Apartments (c. 1925) —Medieval Tudor
- 304 Sixteenth Street — William Thornton and Pearl Walker House (1924) — Tudor Revival
- 406 Sixteenth Street — William and Margaret Walker House (1909) — Prairie
- 1503 Grand Avenue — Holy Name Catholic Church (1914) — Romanesque

The sites can be visited in any order during the tour hours of noon to 5:30 p.m. Trained guides will be stationed at each site to give pertinent information regarding history and architecture. You will have an opportunity to view a private collection of Racine dairy memorabilia on display at St. Richard Church. For additional information on this special exhibit, please refer to the tour booklet. Refreshments will be served at the church.

Advance tickets are $12.00 and can be purchased at the following locations:

Andrea's 2401 – 60th Street, Kenosha
Borzynski's Farm & Floral Market 11600 Washington Avenue, Sturtevant
First Weber Group 1100 North Main Street
Larsen's Bakery 3311 Washington Avenue
Milaeger's 4838 Douglas Avenue
Milaeger's 8717 Hwy. 11, Sturtevant
Miller's Flowers 219 Sixth Street
O & H Bakery 1841 Douglas Avenue
O & H Bakery 4006 Durand Avenue
Personal Touch Flowers by Julie 5445 Spring Street
Personal Touch Flowers by Julie 4060 North Main Street
Uncorkt 240 Main Street

On the day of the tour, tickets are $15.00 and will be sold in the park in front of the Gittings House, 1815 South Main Street. Information is also available at www.preservationracine.org.



William Leroy Gittings (1891-1964) is coming back to life for our tour and you will be able to meet him at his former house at 1815 South Main Street. Mr. Gittings was president of Gold Medal Folding Furniture Company.

At left is a picture of the "Gold Medal Folding Porch Chair" from the 1920 Gold Medal Camp Furniture Manufacturing Company catalog. It is described as "The best and most comfortable folding chair made. Has two folds, as illustrated, making it convenient for packing. Especially fine for the porch, summer home and camp, and, being well finished, is adaptable for many uses in the house."

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Historic Artifacts Ordinance was unanimously supported by the City of Racine's Finance Committee. The City Council then unanimously approved the ordinance. We all need to thank Eric Marcus for his support of this ordinance and working for its passage. The ordinance allows public artifacts to be designated as having historic value and to be saved by the city rather than be destroyed or lost. The Landmarks Preservation Commission should have the first list of objects to be saved to City Council in September for approval. We have all heard of examples of publicly owned objects of historic value being "tossed" or being transferred to other communities.

Joyce and I were recently "up north" on vacation for a week and we used the "back" roads rather than the interstate system to see Wisconsin. Many of the small communities that we drove through have a local historical society in an old building. We made a point of stopping at some of them. This helps support the community today through increased tourism. The people of Wisconsin are interested in saving the history and the historical buildings of their communities.

I want to thank all of the board members and general members who have been working this summer to prepare for our annual tour at the end of September. A project of this nature requires the coordinated effort of many. I enjoyed talking to the Starving Artist Fair attendees about our tour.

Edgar Hoffman

STARVING ARTIST FAIR

Preservation Racine once again had a booth at the Starving Artist Fair on Sunday, August 1st, held in East Park. This is the event where we announce the sites that will be on our annual Tour of Historic Places, and it is the first time for advance ticket sales. Edgar Hoffman and Tony Merlo set up and took down the booth. Edgar, Jan Carter, Tom Yagelski, George Mangold, and Tony and Vivian Merlo were greeters. George designed and produced the poster, using photographs by Chuck Vallone. This handsome poster is now in Mathis Gallery's front window. The tour could not happen without the enthusiastic support of many people. On that Sunday, we had a lot of fun promoting the tour, and we enjoyed meeting the many people who came by our booth. Thank you to all of our volunteers.

HISTORIC FIRE ENGINES AND MORE

Preservation Racine is so fortunate to have a membership rich in diverse interests and talents. Many of our members volunteer these gifts to be used during our Tour of Historic Places to help to make this annual event a wonderful success. David Douglas, a PR member, called me in spring offering to coordinate historic fire engines to be parked near the buildings featured on this year's *Afternoon in the Belle City on the Lake* tour. He has come through in spades. We will have eight fire engines for you to enjoy as you take the tour. Four of the fire engines have served the City of Racine:

Engine #1, a 1961 Ward LaFrance 1000 GPM pumper, was the last fire engine to serve in the 1894 fire house located at 1412 Racine Street. It ended front line service at 810 Eighth Street in 1988. This engine is now owned by Scott W. Tangerstrom and Tom Hall.

Engine #6, a 1947 Mack 1000 GPM pumper, served until 1973 at 2101 Sixteenth Street. This engine is owned by The Racine Fire Bell Club.

Engine #8, a 1954 Pirsch 1000 GPM pumper, served Racine until 1976 at the 1107 Lombard Street station and is now owned by Scott Tangerstrom.

Engine #9, a 1963 Pirsch 1000 GPM pumper, served until 1988 at 2430 Blaine Avenue and is now owned by James Wampole.

Four other fire trucks to be featured on the tour are:

Engine #19, a 1972 Pirsch, 4-door, 1250 GPM pumper, is from Minneapolis, Minnesota, and is now owned by Edward H. Hunt.

A 1955 Pirsch "Quint," 65-foot, aerial, 750 GPM pumper, is from Wausau, Wisconsin, and is now owned by Brett Kaydo.

A 1938 Chevrolet-Darley, 500 GPM pumper, is from Kentucky and is now owned by Chris Linders.

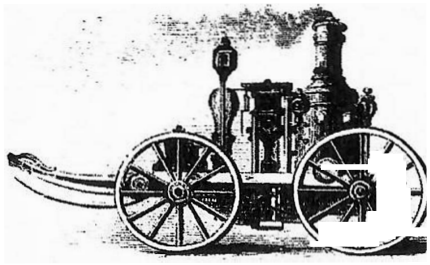
Engine #1, a 1975 Pirsch 1250 GPM pumper, served the City of Kenosha until 2000. It is now owned by Mike Zahn.

We are grateful to the Racine Landmarks Preservation Commission for giving us permission to reprint information from *Racine's Historic Firehouses* in our tour booklet. Drawings of early Racine fire houses by Racine artist, Don Ricchio, are also included in the tour booklet.

Bill Linnenkohl has made arrangements for his barbershop group to serenade you while enjoying your *Afternoon in the Belle City on the Lake.*

All of this effort from so many people really does make Racine the *Belle City on the Lake.*

Vivian Merlo



SHARING OUR STORIES

This year the Wisconsin Historical Society's annual conference is October 15-16, at the Grand Geneva, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, which has special rates for those attending the conference. The theme, *Sharing Our Stories*, invites you to explore how stories bring history to life and give meaning to local history and historic preservation. It offers twenty-four sessions and ten workshops, plus keynote speakers and unique tour opportunities, including Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay and Black Point House in Lake Geneva.

For more information, contact Amy Norlin at 608-264-6579 or amy.norlin@wisconsinhistory.org.